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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00
SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /047 W
----------049575 310827Z /23
O R 310705Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8392
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
CINCPAC
AMCONSUL BOMBAY
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
S/AMCONSUL MADRAS 7231

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

TEHRAN FOR PRESIDENTIAL PARTY

REF: NEW DELHI 18488

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PINT, IN
SUBJECT: CONGRESS PARTY TEETERS ON THE BRINK ON NEW YEAR'S EVE

1. ON THE EVE OF THE JANUARY 1-2 "NATIONAL CONVENTION
OF CONGRESSMEN" CALLED BY MRS. GANDHI'S SUPPORTERS, THE
CONGRESS PARTY REMAINS IN TURMOIL, WITH A FINAL,
DEFINITIVE SPLIT INTO TWO SEPARATE PARTIES A GOOD
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POSSIBILITY. A DE FACTO SPLIT OCCURRED IN THE PARTY'S
SENIOR LEADERSHIP IN DECEMBER 27 WHEN SEVEN PRO-INDIRA
MEMBERS OF THE 21-MEMBER CONGRES WORKING COMMITTEE (CWC)
RESIGNED FROM THE COMMITTEE. (MRS. GANDHI HERSELF HAD
RESIDNED FROM THE CWC ON DECEMBER 18.) THE 13 REMAINING
MEMBERS ARE IN THE CAMP OF CONGRESS PRESIDENT BRAHMANADA
REDDY AND PARLIAMENTARY PARTY LEADER CHAVAN. REDDY HAS

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NOT YET ACCEPTED THE RESIGNATIONS OF MRS. GANDHI AND THE
SEVEN OTHERS, MOST OF WHOM ARE POLITICAL LIGHT-
WEIGHTS WITH LITTLE FOLLOWING IN THEIR HOME STATES,
PERHAPS IN THE HOPE OF AVOIDING AN OUTRIGHT BREAK.

2. HOPES FOR A RECONSILIATION BETWEEN THE WARRING FACTIONS
SEEM DIM AT THIS POINT. REDDY AND CHAVAN ON DECEMBER 27
STRONGLY CONDEMNED THE "CONVENTION" AS AN "ANTI-PARTY
MANEUVER" AND A "CAMOUFLAGE FOR AN ATTEMPT TO SPLIT
THE PARTY FOR PERSONAL AND FACTIONAL ENDS." THEY DIRECTLY
ACCUSED MRS. GANDHI OF TRYING TO REASSERT HER DOMINATION
OVER THE CONGRESS AND "TO CONVERT IT INTO A CAPTIVE
ORGANIZATION." REDDY AND CHAVAN CALLED UPON ALL CONGRESSMEN
TO BOYCOTT THE "CONVENTION" SO AS TO PREVENT THE PARTY
FROM BECOMING A "PLAYTHING IN THE HANDS OF AN INDIVIDUAL."
HINTS FROM LEADERS OF THE REDDY"CHAVAN FACTION THAT THOSE
ATTENDING THE JANUARY 1-2 MEETING WOULD FACE DISCIPLINARY
ACTION MAY NOW BE IMPACTING ON MANY WAVERING CONGRESSMEN.
REPORTS FROMSTATE CAPITALS INCREASINGLY INDICATE THAT
MANY CONGRESSMEN WILL NOT ATTEND THE "CONVENTION." EVEN
IN MRS. GANDHI'S HOME STATE OF U.P., LONG CONSIDERED HER
ONE SAFE STRONGHOLD, A SIZEABLE CHUNK OF CONGRESS ELDERS
HAVE REVOLTED AGAINST THE "CONVENTION" AND HAVE URGED
PARTY FIGURES TO BOYCOTT IT. THER ARE ALSO SIGNS
THAT THE PRO-INDIRA FACTION ITSELF MAY BE DIVIDING OVER
THE IDEA; MRS. GANDHI LOYALIST AND U.P. CONGRESS STRONGMAN
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KAMALAPATI TRIPATHI RECENTLY SOFT-PEDALED THE "CONVENTION"
IDEA, SAYING THAT IT WAS ONLY INTENDED AS A "SEMINAR"
TO DISCUSS THE JANATA GOVERNMENT'S FAILURES. HIS "SOFT"
APPROACH PRODUCED CRITICISM FROM THE HAWKS IN MRS. BANGHI'S
CAMP, WHO SEEM BENT ON OPEN CONFRONTATION WITH THE REDDY/CHAVAN
LEADERSHIP.

3. DESPITE THE LUKEWARM RESPONSE TO THE INVITATIONS,
MRS. BANDHI'S LOYALISTS ARE FORGING AHEAD WITH THE
"CONVENTION". IN AN OBVIOUS BID TO STEM WEAKENING RESOLVE
WITHIN HER FACTION, THE FORMER PMHERSELF ON DECEMBER 30
ATTENDED AND TOOK CHARGE OF THE STERRING COMMITTEE
MEETING WHICH IS DRAWING UP PLANS FOR THE SESSION. BY
DOING SO, SHE MADE IT CLEAR THA THE IDEA IS HERS AND
THAT SHE IS DETERMINED TO SEE IT THROUGH.

4. AS A TUMULTUOUS 1977 DRAWS TO A CLOSE, THE CONGRESS PARTY
WHICH SEEMED SECURITY IN PLACE AT ITS OUTSET IS IN DISARRAY.
YET IF 1977 WAS A BAD FOR THE CONGRESS, 178
PROMISES TO BE LITTLE BETTER.
GOHEEN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
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Concepts: POLITICAL STABILITY, PARTY SCHISMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 31-Dec-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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